



# CITY OF CONCORD

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### Minutes

November 6, 2009

7:30 A.M.

The meeting convened in the Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 41 Green Street, Concord. Coffee and refreshments were served compliments of Christopher Carley.

Chairperson Carley called the meeting to order at 7:40 A.M.

**PRESENT:** Allen Bennett, Tim Bernier, Doug Black, Christopher Carley, Maura Carroll, Byron Champlin, Mark Coen, Peter Cook, Larry Gloekler, John Hoyt, Jan McClure, Bill Norton, Dan St. Hilaire, Claudia Walker, and Stephen Heavener

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager - Development  
Matt Walsh, Asst. for Special Projects  
Bev Rafferty, Administrative Assistant

**GUEST:** Steve Duprey, member, Concord Housing Authority Board of Directors

#### **I. MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2, 2009 EDAC MEETING**

Chairperson Carley gave a brief clarification of language written on page 5, sixth paragraph, where he had spoken about raising money without a prototype of the new building. He just wanted EDAC to understand that he felt the Library Task Force should not be putting out designs that are not real; when they want to put out the building they should do a preliminary design. Jan McClure noted the Task Force is going to make that change. It will be relatively nondescript and they will change the photo.

With that clarification, Bill Norton made a motion to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Allen Bennett; motion passed unanimously.

At this time, EDAC briefly discussed item III on the agenda before beginning discussion on item II.

### **III. EDAC Regulations Sub-Committee Final Report - Continued Review and Discussion**

Chairperson Carley informed EDAC that the regulations sub-committee had met recently and there is another meeting scheduled as the City Council had submitted a referral to the overall community zoning effort regarding the sign ordinance which at this time does not allow for electronic signs. The sub-committee will discuss this further and bring something back to EDAC before it goes to City Council.

There was some brief discussion regarding what types of signs are being looked at and what detail; aesthetics, content, etc. Allen Bennett noted that static electronic signs aren't as problematic and Chairperson Carley mentioned there had been some discussion about that. There is no recommendation at this point but the sub-committee will come back to EDAC for a decision.

At this time EDAC moved on to item II of the agenda.

### **II. Concord Housing & Redevelopment Authority**

John Hoyt, Director of Concord Housing Authority (CHA) informed EDAC of Concord Housing Authority's plan to act as a redevelopment authority. Mr. Hoyt distributed a draft letter to be sent to the City Council regarding their plans.

Mr. Hoyt explained that the Authority has the opportunity to do more and has resources they can share with the community that they have not used in the last several years.

The CHA has power to act as a redevelopment authority which can assemble parcels and, if necessary, redevelop them directly.

Steve Duprey gave a brief history of the CHA. It was created post World War II as Concord Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The CHA was largely responsible for the urban renewal of the 1960's in the downtown area. Since that time, CHA has moved away from that redevelopment role. He noted that over the past seven years Concord Housing Authority has become one of the best, if not the best, housing authority north of New York City. The CHA's finances are very strong. This plan to become a redevelopment authority could be as an adjunct to the City. CHA has the power to issue bonds which is a valuable tool in this endeavor.

Mr. Duprey then spoke briefly on conflicts of interest. The CHA Board has had an extensive discussion of that and it felt that developers and real estate brokers have a potential for conflict of interest. As a result, rules would be established that would prohibit the membership of developers on the CHA Board. Mr. Duprey is planning to step down from the Board shortly as his term expires as well. As another level of assurance, Mr. Duprey noted that the City Manager has and will continue to have authority over all appointments to the Board.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential use of eminent domain. Mr. Hoyt acknowledged this is a power CHA has but does not feel it would be utilized and if ever contemplated, it would be an option of absolute last resort. Mr. Hoyt noted that he would expect that the City Manager would be sure each member appointed to the Board shared this opinion as well.

EDAC inquired if CHA has a project in mind at this time but they do not.

John Hoyt informed EDAC that CHA has better access to Brownfields grants which prepare the way for private development.

Carlos Baía stated that while he appreciated the concern over potential conflict of interest on the Board stemming from developers' participation, he feared that an outright ban on developers as members would deprive the CHA of expert insight needed to make redevelopment work. Mr. Duprey agreed that some direct expertise will be lost but noted that there is plenty of experience between City Hall and organizations such as CRDC which could assist.

Byron Champlin noted Concord is a small community and it will be hard to do projects without tripping over people.

Some EDAC members noted Concord already has its fair share of affordable housing. They inquired as to how the redevelopment authority will work with the surrounding towns. Mr. Duprey noted some neighboring communities have elderly housing but not affordable housing. He's not sure CHA can do much to force the affordable housing issue in other communities.

Matt Walsh informed EDAC that he sees a real value in this collaboration.

John Hoyt noted that the EDAC sub-committee created a few months ago to look at properties for redevelopment could provide that list and the redevelopment authority could use that as a start.

Byron Champlin noted that having the ability to acquire key parcels or assemble key parcels is a valuable asset.

Chairperson Carley thought a memo describing how CHA sees itself functioning in the community would help. Steve Duprey noted they will be doing this work themselves and will not be hiring a development staff. If CHA does not have the expertise needed in one particular area, they will hire for that only but not an entire staff.

Matt Walsh noted the authority can become another partner with the city and Chairperson Carley noted that needs to be laid out to the City Council. The draft letter Mr. Hoyt presented needs to be more concise and clear.

Tim Bernier liked the idea of a redevelopment authority; depressed properties that the private sector can't deal with due to complications or being too risky could benefit from this.

Bill Norton noted there are several reasons to support this:

- Partnership with the City and CRDC;
- Land Banking; and
- Supplement to the city's economic development efforts.

Chairperson Carley returned to Carlos Baía's and Byron Champlin's earlier concerns about the conflict of interest. Perhaps some kind of advisory board could be set up with people who have expertise in law, design, etc so the redevelopment authority could take advantage of that expertise.

Stephen Heavener noted that CRDC does not land bank and they see a redevelopment authority as a collaborative tool.

Chairperson Carley inquired what CHA would like EDAC to do. Mr. Duprey responded that John Hoyt had come to EDAC over a year ago to ask if this could be done. That visit supplied great questions and provided input about the plan. CHA would ideally like EDAC to endorse this to City Council.

Tim Bernier inquired about a mission statement and Steve Duprey noted a business plan will be established. All present agreed this would be a good thing to do.

Bill Norton then added one more reason to support this plan:

- Annual redevelopment brainstorming workshop co-hosted with CRDC and EDAC.

Chairperson Carley noted the whole thing with eminent domain will be a lightning rod. Perhaps some literature should be put out to candidates for the Board explaining the controversy. Byron Champlin noted not to undervalue the perspective; take care of it up front in a very simple way so there is no minimal chance of misunderstanding.

Bill Norton made a motion that EDAC endorse and encourage the Concord Housing Authority to move forward and proceed to City Council but elaborate on specifics and underlying concepts of why this is a good thing to do; Allen Bennett seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

EDAC will send a letter to City Council to that effect.

***(John Hoyt and Steve Duprey left the meeting at 8:40 A.M.)***

Due to the time, Chairperson Carley informed EDAC that discussion on the regulations sub-committee final report would be postponed until the December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### **IV. Other Business**

- Bill Norton asked EDAC to invite Kathy Temchack, Director of Real Estate Assessments, to the next EDAC meeting to do an annual briefing on the tax assessments. There has been a shift in real estate assessments and it would be good to hear her perspective for the future. This does not have to be detailed but simply state where we're at and where we're going.
- Creative Economy: Byron Champlin informed EDAC that four people involved with the Creative Concord project have been nominated to the Mayor to fill two seats on EDAC. He did not provide the names of the nominees at this time. He continued that several things are happening with the Creative Economy project in terms of working with the League of NH Craftsmen, the Chamber has identified possible purchasers of CDFA tax credits; Chris Carley is chairing a sub-committee dealing with incubator space and assessing the need for same; there is also a public arts sub-committee meeting taking place today to discuss the issues involved in public art, i.e. the highway view of Storrs Street buildings. Susan Leidy chairs the public arts sub-committee.

***(Maura Carroll left the meeting at 8:45 A.M.)***

Mr. Champlin continued that they are trying to work with the Housing Authority regarding the Annicchiarico Theatre building to determine if there is a future for this theatre - there are no seats, no paneling - it's just an empty shell at this time.

Mr. Champlin noted the Arts Market was a big success; a lot of creative activity. There were over 60 artists in attendance.

- Carlos Baía informed EDAC that he plans to submit to EDAC in December the request from the Grappone dealerships to have water supplied from Concord to their facilities at Bow Junction. EDAC should discuss the development impact of this request.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Rafferty  
Administrative Assistant